



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

January 8, 2009

For immediate release

- 1. DNR, IDALS offering grants to help local efforts to improve water quality**
- 2. Manure application on frozen ground poses risks to water**
- 3. Water quality and livestock issues dominate January EPC meeting**
- 4. Natural resource issues highlighted at EPC-NRC meeting**
- 5. Master matrix passes 37 counties in first week of the year**

DNR, IDALS OFFERING GRANTS TO HELP LOCAL EFFORTS TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY

MEDIA CONTACTS: Steve Hopkins, DNR watershed improvement coordinator, at (515) 281-6402 or Stephen.Hopkins@dnr.iowa.gov ; Tess Capps, IDALS communications specialist, at (515) 281-8606 or Tess.Capps@iowaagriculture.gov.

NOTE TO EDITORS: *The following is a joint news release from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship.*

DES MOINES — The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) are encouraging groups across the state to apply for grant funding to help improve Iowa's water quality.

The grants from DNR and IDALS' Division of Soil Conservation (DSC) allow groups, such as Soil and Water Conservation Districts and other organizations, to further their local water quality improvement efforts. Watershed and water quality projects help individual Iowans make changes on the land in order to improve the quality of water entering our rivers, streams and lakes.

“Through our grants program, we’ve worked with many Iowans over the years to improve their local lake, river or stream,” said Bill Ehm, the DNR’s Water Policy Coordinator. “We’re encouraging new groups to apply, and we look forward to helping more Iowans plan a comprehensive local effort to improve water quality and their communities.”

“Individual landowners, organizations, and towns can get assistance from their local Soil and Water Conservation District to improve water quality,” said Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey. “Through project grants, landowners can receive technical and financial support to address water quality and watershed issues.”

In a joint application process, Iowa Soil and Water Conservation Districts can apply for funding from DNR Section 319, and/or the Water Protection Fund (WPF) and the Watershed Protection Fund (WSPF) from IDALS-DSC. Other groups and organizations are invited to apply for Section 319 funding through the DNR. The deadline for applications is April 1, 2009.

The DNR and DSC regional watershed coordinators will work with groups that receive Section 319 grants to complete a Watershed Management Plan, or WMP. These comprehensive plans are designed to help groups meet water quality goals by identifying problems and offering solutions. While WMPs are not required prior to applying for a Section 319 grant this year, the WMP must be completed before the project can receive Section 319 funding. Beginning next year, completed WMPs will be required prior to applying for a grant.

The DNR is able to provide these grants annually through funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The grants, made possible through Section 319 of the federal Clean Water Act, are often called “Section 319 Grants” and currently fund about 50 projects in Iowa, focusing on impaired waters. The IDALS-DSC is able to provide grants annually through funding from the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program and the state’s Environment First Fund. Currently, 70 watershed and water quality projects in 65 Soil and Water Conservation Districts are supported by these funds.

Groups considering applying for a grant can contact Steve Hopkins, DNR watershed improvement coordinator, at (515) 281-6402 with questions and for one-on-one assistance regarding Section 319 grants. Those with questions about WPF or WSPF funding can contact Jim Gillespie, IDALS Field Services Bureau Chief, at (515) 281-7043.

More information on grants and watershed improvement is available on the DNR’s Web site at <http://watershed.iowadnr.gov> or the IDALS-DSC Web site at www.iowaagriculture.gov/soilConservation.asp.

Writer: Jessie Brown

###

MANURE APPLICATION ON FROZEN GROUND POSES RISKS TO WATER

MEDIA CONTACT: Dan Olson at (712) 243-1934.

DES MOINES – Livestock producers who lack adequate manure storage may face a dilemma – how to apply manure after the ground has frozen without risking adverse effects on nearby streams.

“Applying manure on frozen or snow-covered ground is risky business,” said Dan Olson, an environmental specialist in the Atlantic DNR field office, “because the manure thaws on top of the ground and runs off before the ground thaws and it can soak in.

“Producers need to know that they may be setting themselves up for a problem, and carefully evaluate the risk that the manure could reach a stream or underground tile inlet before they apply,” he added.

Olson said that if storage is full, the best choice is to transfer the manure to another storage structure. But, if they must land apply, they may be able to reduce the risks by choosing flat ground a long distance from a stream or tile inlet. Another good choice may be to remove just enough manure to keep the manure storage from overflowing before spring, without emptying the entire storage structure.

The risks go up as snow depth increases and the time between application and the spring thaw decreases. So, if winter application is unavoidable, it's best to apply manure to bare ground early in the winter.

Following the DNR's rules and recommendations for applying on frozen or snow-covered ground may help reduce the risks, but producers need to realize that they are responsible if manure reaches surface or groundwater and causes a water quality violation.

Olson added that when surface applying manure, producers must stay at least 200 feet away from environmentally sensitive areas such as wells, streams and sinkholes, and at least 800 feet from high quality water resources, such as the Iowa great lakes.

More information about separation distances and high quality waters is available on the DNR Web site at www.iowadnr.gov/afo/files/sepdstb4.pdf or www.iowadnr.gov/afo/files/hqwr2.pdf

The Iowa Manure Management Action Group also has information available on winter application at www.agronext.iastate.edu/immag/pubsimms.html or directly at www.agronext.iastate.edu/immag/pubs/imms/vol3.pdf

The DNR will be recommending revisions to state rules for manure application on snow-covered or frozen ground at the Jan. 13 Environmental Protection Commission meeting. The recommendations are available at www.iowadnr.gov/epc/09jan13a.html

Writer: Karen Grimes

#

WATER QUALITY AND LIVESTOCK ISSUES DOMINATE JANUARY EPC MEETING

MEDIA CONTACT: Karen Grimes at (515) 281-5135.

URBANDALE – Rules for animal feeding operations, septic systems and the reclassification of Iowa streams based on their attainable uses will be discussed at the Jan. 13 meeting of the Environmental Protection Commission in Urbandale.

Commissioners will be asked to initiate a rule proposal that would limit manure application on frozen or snow-covered ground to the times and places it is least likely to cause water quality problems. The rule would primarily affect those animal feeding operations that are required to have a manure management plan or a nutrient management plan.

In other action, they will be asked to approve a final rule for private septic systems. The proposal would require inspections before completing property sales or transfers. Other provisions would update technologies that can be used and certify inspectors.

The DNR will present information about a rule proposal that would change the recreational and aquatic life use designations for 134 stream sections. This is the second group of proposed changes based on the scientific analysis of each stream segment to determine if it is capable of supporting its highest possible use.

The meeting will be held at 10 a.m. at the DNR Air Quality Building at 7900 Hickman Road in Urbandale. The meeting is open to the public and public participation is scheduled for 10:30 a.m.

The commission has two scheduled appointments: the first at 1 p.m. is a meeting with 76 Ltd. of Washington County, and at 2 p.m. there is an appeal of a proposed decision regarding Anthony Herman, dba Mighty Good Used Cars.

The complete schedule is as follows:

- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes
- Director's Remarks

- IDALS-DSC – Nonpoint Source Program Administrative Staffing Assistance Contract
- Notice of Intended Action: Chapter 65-provisions limiting the surface application of manure/open feedlot effluent on frozen or snow-covered ground
- Proposed Rule - Amend IAC 567 Chapter 134, Certification of Groundwater Professionals and Underground Storage Tank (UST) Compliance Inspectors
- Referrals to the Attorney General
 - Maple Grove Farms, L.L.C. (Plymouth County) – Animal Feeding Operations
 - 76 Ltd. (Washington County) – Animal Feeding Operations / Air Quality / Solid Waste
- Anthony Herman dba Mighty Good Used Cars
- Appeal of Proposed Decision
- Review of Regulatory Options for Addressing the Vacatur of CAMR
- Final Rule: Chapters 22 and 23: Air Quality Program Rules – Adoption of federal air quality standards and revisions to air construction permit requirements
- Notice of Intended Action – Chapter 61 – Water Quality Standards (Stream Reclassifications via Use Assessment and Use Attainability Analyses – Batch #2)
- Final Adoption – Chapter 69 – Onsite Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems, NPDES General permit #4 and Chapter 64, “Wastewater Construction and Operation Permits”
- Notice of Intended Action -Chapter 65 – Definitions and Regulations Pertaining to NPDES Permits
- Annual Report to the Governor
- Draft amendments to 65.10(5); construction permit “demand for hearing” procedures
- Monthly Reports
- General Discussion
 - Cancel May 18th Tour and Host May 19th EPC in Urbandale
 - Water Quality Advocate Bi-Annual Update
 - Coal Ash Disposal Update
- Items for Next Month’s Meeting
 - February 17th – Urbandale
 - March 17th – Urbandale

Look for more information about the agenda items on the DNR Web site under “Commissions and Boards” at www.iowadnr.gov.

The members of the commission are Henry Marquard, chair, Muscatine; Charlotte Hubbell, vice chair, Des Moines; Suzanne Morrow, secretary, Storm Lake; David Petty, Eldora; Susan Heathcote, Des Moines; Paul Johnson, Decorah, Marty Stimson, Cedar Rapids; Shearon Elderkin, Cedar Rapids; and Eugene Ver Steeg, Inwood. The director of the DNR is Richard Leopold.

Writer: Karen Grimes

#

NATURAL RESOURCE ISSUES HIGHLIGHTED AT EPC-NRC MEETING

MEDIA CONTACT: Karen Grimes at (515) 281-5135.

DES MOINES – Key natural resource issues facing the state will be discussed at the joint meeting of the Environmental Protection and Natural Resource Commissions Jan. 14 in Des Moines.

Director Richard Leopold will discuss available resources, proposed budget reductions, and the need for sustainable funding. Proposed increases in license fees will be addressed by the DNR's top management.

Commissioners will discuss the Environmental Protection Commission's report to the Governor and Legislature.

The DNR management team will offer current strategies and plans to address environmental issues of air quality, climate change, a statewide water plan and flood plain management,

Commissioners will also hear updates from staff on Honey Creek Resort State Park, the Deer Policy Advisory Committee and concentrated animal feeding operations.

The joint meeting will begin at 10 a.m. in the fourth floor conference room of the Wallace Building, 502 E. Ninth St., Des Moines.

The complete agenda follows:

- Director's Remarks
- EPC Report to the Governor and Legislature
- Department Budget Reductions
- Sustainable Funding
- State Air Plan & Non-Attainment
- Climate Change
- Water Plan & Floodplain Management
- Honey Creek Resort State Park Update
- Deer Policy Advisory Committee
- Hunting & Fishing License Increase
- Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations
- General Discussion
- Upcoming Joint Meeting in May or June

The complete agenda is available on the DNR Web site at www.iowadnr.gov/epc/index.html.

Writer: Karen Grimes

###

MASTER MATRIX PASSES 37 COUNTIES IN FIRST WEEK OF THE YEAR

MEDIA CONTACT: Jerah Gallinger at (515) 313-8909.

DES MOINES – Nearly 40 Iowa counties have notified the DNR that they intend to evaluate construction permit applications and proposed locations for animal confinements by using the master matrix in their counties.

Animal producers in counties that use the master matrix must meet higher standards than other confinement producers who also need a construction permit. They must earn points on the master matrix by choosing a site and using practices that reduce impacts on air, water and the community.

By Jan. 6, the following counties notified the DNR that they will be using the matrix in 2009:

Adair, Appanoose, Audubon, Buchanan, Butler, Calhoun, Carroll, Cerro Gordo, Clay, Dallas, Dickinson, Emmet, Greene, Grundy, Guthrie, Hamilton, Hancock, Humboldt, Ida, Jackson, Jones, Louisa, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Mitchell, Monroe, Montgomery, O'Brien, Page, Sac, Story, Tama, Van Buren, Webster, Winneshiek and Worth.

Counties that adopt the master matrix can provide more input to producers on site selection, the proposed structures and proposed facility management. Participating counties can also participate in DNR site visits to a proposed confinement site.

While all counties may submit comments to the DNR during the review process for permit applications, counties that adopt the master matrix can also appeal a preliminary permit approval to the Environmental Protection Commission.

The deadline for enrolling in the program is Jan. 31 for counties interested in using the matrix during the next 12 months.

Producers and citizens can obtain more information and view a map of participating counties at www.iowadnr.gov/afo/matrix.html.

Only those producers who must get a construction permit are affected by the matrix.

Writer: Karen Grimes

